

THE VICTIMS' VOICE

Summer 2018 Newsletter



Waterbury Judicial District - Pilot Program For Legal Assistance In Restraining Order Hearings

On July 1, 2018, the Connecticut Judicial Branch began a one-year pilot program to offer free legal representation to low-income families in restraining order hearings.

Under the pilot program Connecticut Legal Services, Inc. will provide legal counsel to qualified applicants seeking protection from abuse, and the Division of Public Defender Services will provide legal counsel to qualified respondents.

To qualify for these services, an applicant's income must fall within the following guidelines:

| <u>House hold:</u> | <u>Annual Gross Income:</u> |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Single person household | \$23,760 |
| + One dependent | \$32,040 |
| + Two dependents | \$40,320 |
| + Three dependents | \$48,600 |
| + Four or more dependents | \$48,600 plus \$8,320 per dependent |

The Waterbury judicial district covers the towns of Middlebury, Naugatuck, Prospect, Southbury, Waterbury, Watertown, Wolcott and Woodbury.

QUESTIONS?
CONTACT OUR OFFICE

TOLL FREE
1-88-771-3126

VISIT US ONLINE
WWW.CT.GOV/OVA



This Issue...

On the Road

VRCT & Alliance
Join Forces

24hr
Victim Hotlines

SCAM Alert
Vacation Rentals

VOICES
Department of Correction

DOC
Victim Services Unit



OVA staff will be at the following events, and are happy to answer questions and share valuable information!

August 14, 2018
Charter Oak Health Center Block Party
Hungerford, St Hartford, CT
10-2 p.m.

September 25, 2018
Bloomfield Senior Expo
330 Park Ave. Bloomfield, CT
10 - 12 p.m.

October 4, 2018
Haddam Youth & Family Services Senior Expo
HK High School Higganum, CT
9 - 1 p.m.

If you'd like the OVA to provide a training or attend an event for your organization please contact our office at 860-550-6632.

CONNECTICUT ALLIANCE TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Support. Advocate. Prevent.

formerly CONNSACS

VRCTT Attorneys Join The Alliance

The Victim Rights Center of Connecticut (VRCTT), has joined Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence (The Alliance) as part of an acquisition agreement.

VRCTT is a legal services organization that provides trauma-informed, holistic services to survivors of sexual assault and other violent crime in criminal, civil and family courts. The Alliance is a statewide coalition of individual sexual assault crisis program that works to end sexual violence through victim assistance, community education, and public policy advocacy.

VRCTT is a team of five attorneys, led by Executive Director Maura Crossin, who specialize in the representation of victims of sexual violence, child abuse, elder abuse, survivors of homicide, as well as victims of crime who identify as LGBTQ. The assistance VRCTT provides

range from securing safety protections, education, housing, employment, immigration, compensation or benefits.

The partnership between the CT Alliance and VRCTT will offer direct and coordinated services to help ensure survivors get the help they need. Both organizations are committed to building communities free of sexual violence and to providing trauma-informed and culturally-affirming advocacy, prevention, and intervention services centered on the voices of survivors.



*Connecticut Alliance
to End Sexual Violence*
 96 Pitkin Street
 East Hartford, CT
 860-282-9881

www.endsexualviolencect.org



CT VICTIM RESOURCE 24HR HOTLINE NUMBERS

Sexual Violence
English 1-888-999-5545
Spanish 1-888-568-8332

Domestic Violence
1-888-774-2900

Child Abuse Care Line
1-800-842-2288

Elder Abuse 24hr
1-888-385-4225

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)
1-800-544-3690



VACATION RENTALS

SCAM WARNING

Vacation rentals

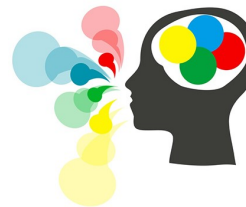
Imagine arriving to your family vacation rental home only to find out you have no reservation, no place to stay and your money is gone? Scammers have created listings using real and fake homes posing as vacation rentals and victimizing unknowing people out of hundreds of dollars.

To protect yourself from scammers:

- Don't be rushed into making a decision.
- Always use a reputable website or vacation rental company.
- Research the property, and read reviews to confirm the deal is legitimate.
- Be aware of low nightly and weekly rates.
- Check that the address of the property really exists.
- Get a copy of the contract before sending a deposit.
- Never wire money or pay with a prepaid credit card.
- If it seems too good to be true, it probably is!

VOICES

Victim-Offender Institutional Corrective
Education Services
Merit Lajoie, Complaint Officer



VOICES is a Department of Correction program available to inmates during their incarceration. The program is intended to inform inmates of the negative impact of crime on individuals, families and the community. This program specifically gives victims of crime an opportunity to share their story and how crime impacted their life, their family, and their future.

In the aftermath of crime, some victims want to do something but have no idea what that something could be. Generally, victims understand that offenders will be released from prison and that it is better if the inmate has engaged in programs to rehabilitate and become a contributing and productive member of the community. Victims have an important voice in the rehabilitation process, who better to inform inmates about the impact of crime on victims but victims?

VOICES is not for every crime victim and should only be considered after careful thought and preparation. If you participate, you will be asked to relive a very painful experience in your life. You will be asked to share your experience with inmates, who may or may not be receptive to your message. You will be expected to deliver your message in a respectful manner, without judgment of the inmates in the group. You will be asked to put away your anger, pain and frustration to help inmates understand the real consequences of crime and the long lasting effects.

As for me, I participate in VOICES for one simple reason—there is nothing I can do to change what happened in my life. I can, however, try to change what might happen in the future. Planting a seed and hoping it will grow is something I can do. At the end of the day, I get to walk out of the prison. I walk out knowing I've done what I can to help the inmates understand that a life of crime is not the answer. And when they eventually walk out, that is the message I hope has grown within them and is carried with them as they leave.

To learn more about this program contact Merit Lajoie at the Office of The Victim Advocate.

Connecticut Department of Correction

Victim Services Unit

The Victim Services Unit supports the mission of the Department of Correction by enhancing community safety through positive collaboration with other state agencies and vendors regarding victim notification. The Victim Services Unit provides timely notification of an inmate's change of status, and ensures that victims are provided an opportunity to be heard during any community release considerations.

Victim Services operates a Notification Program that offers the following services:

- Accused Status Notification Program - offers information about changes in the status on unsentenced (accused) inmates. This may include:
 - Bond out from a correctional facility
 - Discharge from Court
 - Escape
 - Return to Custody
- The Post- Conviction Notification Program - offers information regarding any type of change or possible change in the status of convicted (sentenced) inmates. This may include:
 - Parole Hearing Dates
 - Any inmate initiated request
 - Notice of Application
 - Community Release reviews
 - Community Release placements
 - End of Sentence Notifications
 - Notification for an inmate who escaped/absconded from a correctional institution or community release placement
 - Notification of inmate death
- Persons who may request notification from the DOC Victim Services Unit are:
 - Crime victims
 - Parents/guardians
 - Relatives of crime victims
 - Legal representatives of crime victims
 - State's attorneys

Phone: 888-869-7057

Fax: (860) 692-7867

E-mail: doc.victimservices@ct.gov

